



The **ORGANIC INTEGRITY** **QUARTERLY**

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Organic Integrity from Farm to Table, Consumers Trust the Organic Label.

Celebrating 10 Years of USDA Organic

In 1990, Congress signed the Organic Foods Production Act, setting the foundation for national organic standards. October 2012 marks the 20th anniversary of the first National Organic Standards Board meeting and 10th anniversary of when the USDA organic regulations “went live”—a lot has been accomplished in that relatively short period of time.

Standards. In addition to the USDA organic regulations’ general standards addressing the production and handling of organic products, we’re developing specific standards to govern organic aquaculture, apiculture, mushrooms, pet food, and origin of livestock. NOP is also working to clarify existing standards.

Opportunity. Organic agriculture can create many opportunities for farms and businesses: environmental stewardship, biodiversity, local economy support, and premium product prices.

Growth. U.S. sales of organic foods have grown from \$1 billion in 1990 to an estimated \$31.4 billion in 2011. As of January 2011, there were 28,386 USDA organic operations across 133 countries. USDA’s strives to have 2,719 additional U.S. farms and businesses certified to the USDA organic regulations by 2015, reaching a goal of 20,000 U.S. organic operations.

Integrity. In the “Age of Enforcement,” we are committed to protecting the integrity of organic products. Our staff closed 279 complaints of suspected regulatory violation, enforcing the USDA organic regulations to the fullest extent of the law when investigations confirmed violations. We have also enhanced our oversight of USDA-authorized certifying agents, providing additional training to improve the consistency and accuracy of how the USDA organic regulations are applied.

We encourage organizations supporting farmers to use the Organic Literacy Initiative to help connect current and prospective organic customers with appropriate USDA resources, helping to answer the question, “is organic an option for me?” www.ams.usda.gov/organicinfo

Sincerely,

Miles V. McEvoy

Deputy Administrator, National Organic Program



USDA ORGANIC CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

As we celebrate 10 years of USDA’s oversight of organic products, we recognize the dedication of those involved in organic agriculture’s origins, helping it flourish into a thriving sector of the U.S. food system.

Late 1980s Early organic farmers—concerned about conflicting standards, dubious “organic” claims, fraud, and consumer confusion—request federal oversight of organic products.

Organic Foods Production Act of 1990: Setting the Foundation

October 1990 Congress passes Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA, Title XXI of the 1990 Farm Bill), setting the foundation for national standards covering the production and handling of “organic” products. OFPA also authorizes USDA to establish the National Organic Program (NOP) to administer these standards and the National Organic Standards Board to advise the NOP.

January 1992 Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan appoints the first members of the National Organic Standards Board, beginning almost 10 years of work to develop national organic standards.

December 1997 NOP publishes the first proposed rule for national organic standards, receiving more than 280,000 public comments. NOP receives the coveted Hammer Award from Vice-President Al Gore for its use of the Internet and other communication technology to manage comments.

USDA Organic Regulations: Implementation and Oversight

December 2000 NOP publishes final rule published in Federal Register, establishing national organic standards. Rule is effective 60 days after publication and is fully implemented 18 months after effective date.

April 2002 Certifying agents, accredited by the NOP, begin certifying organic farms and businesses.

August 2002 USDA announces the allocation of \$1 million for the first Organic Certification Cost Share program for 15 states, reimbursing certified operations in those states for up to 75 percent of their certification costs, up to a maximum of \$500.

October 2002 USDA organic regulations “go live” (are fully implemented).

November 2002 USDA announces Organic Cost Share Program for all 50 states, allocating \$5 million to reimburse certified operations for up to 75 percent of their certification expenses.

June 2005 The First Circuit Court rules on a number of critical questions related to organic handling, livestock transition, and the role of synthetic ingredients. Ruling helps further shape the USDA organic regulations.

November 2005 Congress amends OFPA to allow approved synthetics in organic foods and address the transition of organic dairy herds and pasture to organic production.

USDA ORGANIC CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

- January 2006** The number of certified organic farms and businesses in the U.S. exceeds 10,000.
- April 2006** NOP hosts a symposium to discuss ruminant livestock's access to pasture.
- June 2008** Congress signs the 2008 Farm Bill, renewing support for certification expenses for thousands of farmers and businesses via the Organic Certification Cost Share Programs.
- April 2009** Kathleen Merrigan , a former Senator Leahy staffer that helped draft OFPA and former USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Administrator that signed the December 2000 final rule, is sworn in as Deputy Secretary of Agriculture.
- June 2009** Deputy Secretary Merrigan announces a first-of-its-kind organic equivalency arrangement between U.S. and Canada, creating new markets for organic operations.
- October 2009** The NOP is elevated to its own program within the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. Miles McEvoy becomes the first NOP Deputy Administrator.
- February 2010** NOP publishes final rules requiring that ruminant livestock graze on organic pasture during the grazing season and receive a significant portion of their diet from grazed forages. More than 100,000 public comments were received to help shape and revise this rule.
- November 2010** NOP sends the first NOP Organic Insider message, using this email newsletter to inform the organic community of activities related to NOP's oversight of organic products.
- January 2012** 17,281 organic farms and processing facilities in the U.S. are certified to the USDA organic standards, fueling a \$31.4 billion U.S. organic industry. Worldwide, there are 28,386 USDA organic operations across 133 countries.
- February 2012** U.S. and the European Union sign an organic equivalency arrangement, streamlining trade and creating a partnership between the two largest organic markets in the world.
- June 2012** NOP civil penalties issued surpasses \$200,000.
- September 2012** USDA launches the Organic Literacy Initiative, a training program to help connect organic customers with appropriate USDA resources. A companion toolkit also helps prospective farms and businesses answer the question, *is organic an option for me?*
- October 2012** NOP marks 10 years of overseeing certified organic products.

Interested in hearing about future USDA organic milestones? Join the 15,000 individuals currently receiving NOP Organic Insider email updates at <http://bit.ly/NOPOrganicInsider>.



Meeting Summary: NOSB in Providence, RI

The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) held its public meeting October 15-18, 2012, in Providence, Rhode Island. At the beginning, the NOP provided an update on its activities, priorities, and NOSB's substance review process. Introductory presentations also highlighted the NOP's 10th anniversary and the Organic Literacy Initiative. Over the course of four days, the NOSB heard comments from approximately 80 members of the public on a wide range of issues. The NOSB discussed these and other suggested changes to their proposals from about 700 written public comments. A summary of the NOSB's subsequent votes is provided below. The final recommendations from the Providence meeting will be posted in the near future at www.ams.usda.gov/NOSBMeetings.

Note: NOSB is an advisory body to the Secretary of Agriculture. NOSB recommendations are not NOP policy unless the NOP issues final rules, final guidance, final instructions, or a policy memorandum that adopts the NOSB recommendations. They are not part of the USDA organic regulations unless such action is taken.

Petitioned Substances. The NOSB responded to several petitions to amend the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances (National List). This section of the USDA organic regulations identifies exemptions to the following general rule: synthetic substances are prohibited unless specifically allowed and natural substances are allowed unless specifically prohibited. In organic processed products, all non-organic ingredients must be specifically allowed. "Motion failed" indicates that less than two thirds of the NOSB members voted to make the change in question, meaning that USDA does not have the authority to amend the USDA organic regulations for that substance.

Substance	Section	Action Considered by NOSB	NOSB Recommendation
Biodegradable Mulch Film	§ 205.601	Allow in organic crop production.	Allow in organic crop production with restrictions.
Ferric Phosphate	§ 205.601	Prohibit as slug/snail bait in organic crop production.	Motion failed.
Oxidized Lignite	§ 205.601	Allow as soil amendment in organic crop production.	Motion failed.
Propylene Glycol Monolaurate	§ 205.601	Allow as acaricide in organic crop production.	Motion failed.
Sulfuric Acid	§ 205.601	Allow as a stabilizer for digested poultry manure in organic crop production.	Motion failed.
Rotenone	§ 205.602	Prohibit in organic crop production. <i>Note: the NOSB took action on this substance without a petition to amend the National List.</i>	Prohibit in organic crop production effective January 1, 2016.
Nonanoic Acid	§ 205.603	Allow as insecticide in organic livestock production.	Motion failed.

Substance	Section	Action Considered by NOSB	NOSB Recommendation
Ascorbyl Palmitate	§ 205.605(b)	Allow as preservative in organic infant formula.	Motion failed.
Beta-Carotene	§ 205.605(b)	Allow the synthetic form in organic infant formula.	Motion failed.
L-Carnitine	§ 205.605(b)	Allow in organic infant formula.	Motion failed.
L-Methionine	§ 205.605(b)	Allow in infant formula made with soy-based protein.	Allow in infant formula made with soy-based protein.
Lutein	§ 205.606	Allow in organic infant formula, listed at § 205.605(b)	Motion failed.
Lycopene	§ 205.605(b)	Allow in organic infant formula.	Motion failed.
Nucleotides	§ 205.605(b)	Allow in organic infant formula.	Motion failed.
Taurine	§ 205.605(b)	Allow in organic infant formula.	Motion failed.

Inerts in Pesticides. The NOSB recommended a procedure for reviewing all EPA List 4 and 3 inerts used in organic-approved pesticide formulations. The procedure includes details on regulatory language changes for the listing of inerts on the National List, how NOSB review will proceed by group, what proposed groups have been identified so far, how technical reviews will be commissioned, and the anticipated timeline for this project. The procedure also states that, given the resources and time needed to complete these reviews, the NOSB will reassess the timeline after reviewing the first few groups of inerts.

2012 Research Priorities. The NOSB identified the top research priorities in organic agriculture, requesting that NOP coordinate with USDA research agencies to encourage funding awards in these areas.

NOSB Policy and Procedures Manual (PPM). The NOSB voted to change the public comment procedures in the PPM. The recommendation addresses the comment sign-up process, time allocation for comments, and how public comment delivery at the meeting should proceed. A second motion to amend the process by which the NOSB would receive public communication failed. A third proposal, addressing NOSB members' conflict of interest, was withdrawn at the meeting prior to a vote.

Discussion Documents. NOSB subcommittees published discussion documents with request for public comments:

Omnivore Diets. The USDA organic regulations currently prohibit feeding mammalian or poultry slaughter by-products to mammals or poultry. The discussion document outlines some of the pros (e.g., potential reduction in use of synthetic methionine in organic poultry) and cons (e.g., consumer perception) of amending the regulations to allow omnivore diets.

Other Ingredients. In November 2011, NOP requested that the NOSB clarify which "other ingredients" contained within handling materials on the National List are allowed. The discussion document outlines several approaches to meeting the NOP's request.

Percent Organic. Certifiers verify the percentage of organic content in multi-ingredient organic products, ensuring they meet all criteria for the specific labeling category. Certifiers were asked for information on how they make this determination, which challenges they face, and how this process could be clarified to increase consistency.

Biodiversity. In May 2009, the NOSB recommended addressing biodiversity in organic systems, which would affect materials review and organic system plans. The discussion document summarized progress to date and asked for feedback on other potential ways to conserve biodiversity.

GMOs + Seed Purity. The use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) is prohibited in the production and handling of organic products, including seeds. The discussion document requests comments on seed purity standards, presence of GMOs in seed, and testing.



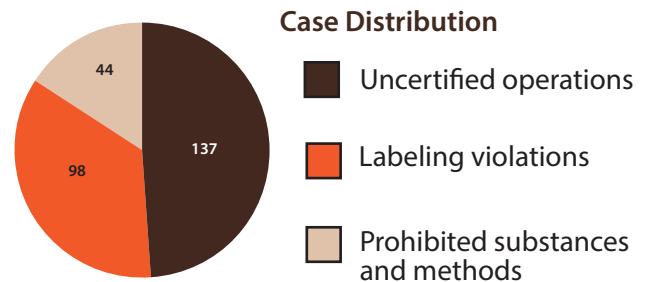
Organic Integrity Update: Fiscal Year 2012 Roundup

The NOP is committed to protecting the integrity of USDA organic products and creating a level playing field for certified operations. To accomplish these goals, the NOP enforces the USDA organic regulations to the fullest extent possible while protecting compliant operations from undue harm.

2012 Compliance and Enforcement Actions

During Fiscal Year 2012, NOP has issued nine penalties to willful violators totalling over \$120 thousand. The NOP also opened 279 complaint cases received from members of the public (a 54 percent increase from Fiscal Year 2011) and closed 279 cases of suspected regulatory violations (a 121 percent increase from Fiscal Year 2011), taking enforcement action when the complaint was validated. The distribution of closed case types is shown to the right.

The NOP intends to do more proactive outreach to help operations understand if they need to be certified and how to correctly label their products. These efforts will allow staff to focus their resources on more complex cases.



Certifying Agent and Trade Agreement Compliance Audits

The NOP audits certifying agents around the world to ensure they are applying the USDA organic regulations in an appropriate, fair, and consistent manner. Through December 2012, NOP and other USDA staff will conduct compliance audits for the following certifying agents in the indicated location, requiring corrective actions where appropriate:

- Natural Food Certifiers – New York
- Rhode Island Department of Agriculture – Rhode Island
- Eco-Cert – China
- Institute for Marketecology – China
- Global Organic Alliance – Ohio
- Certification of Environmental Standards GmbH – Germany
- Quality Certification Service – Florida
- LACON GmbH – Germany
- Institute for Marketecology – Switzerland
- Control Union Certifications – Netherlands
- Georgia Crop Improvement Association – Georgia
- LETIS S.A. – Argentina
- Argencert S.A. – Argentina
- Government of New Zealand – New Zealand

Help Us Protect Organic Integrity!

Suspended/revoked organic operations
<http://bit.ly/suspended-revoked>

Fraudulent organic certificates
<http://bit.ly/fraud-certs>

Suspected violation complaints
NOPCompliance@ams.usda.gov



“Tails” of the Organic Pet Food Rule

Since the National Organic Program began in 2002, sales of organic pet food have steadily climbed. In 2011, organic pet food sales reached \$101 million, increasing 7.3 percent from 2010 (2012 Organic Industry Survey, Organic Trade Association). This market growth has occurred while the industry awaits standards for organic pet food. Currently, pet food is certified using portions of the handling and livestock feed sections of the USDA organic regulations, which has presented hurdles for the organic pet food sector. For example, the USDA organic regulations prohibit feeding mammals by-products from other mammals or poultry. These by-products are important nutrient sources and their allowance in pet food would create new markets for organic by-products not likely to enter the human food chain.

In 2008, the National Organic Standards Board approved a recommendation for organic standards specific to pet food. The recommendation aims to align pet food composition and labeling with the USDA organic regulations, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requirements, and State pet food regulations. The NOSB recommendation was enabled by the work of the Pet Food Task Force, which included individuals from pet food manufacturing, organic consulting, and federal agencies. The pet food industry has eagerly awaited standards providing clear and consistent composition and labeling requirements for organic pet food. The following provides a snapshot of NOP’s progress towards a proposed rule for organic pet food standards based on the NOSB recommendation:

Economic Impact Analysis

The NOP must consider the economic impact of any changes to the USDA organic regulations; if the action will significantly affect the industry, additional assessments and justifications are required. One part of that evaluation includes a description of the baseline, or current, conditions of the organic pet food sector. In order to describe the baseline, the NOP has consulted the Pet Food Institute and the FDA, as well as manufacturers and suppliers of pet food and pet food ingredients, to learn about the:

- Ingredient requirements for a complete and balanced pet food.
- Acceptable ingredients for use in pet food.
- Availability of ingredients in organic form.
- Structure of the pet food industry.
- Number of organic producers supplying raw commodities for organic pet food.
- Types of production costs (*continued on page 8*).



“Tails” of the Organic Pet Food Rule (continued from page 7)

The NOP is continuing to assess how the proposed rule could impact the participants in the organic pet food sector in terms of benefits and costs. As the NOSB recommendation provides a thorough blueprint for the pet food regulatory language, our efforts over the next several months will primarily focus on completing the impact analyses to move the rule forward.

Nutrients in Pet Food

After consulting with FDA, NOP stated in April 2010 that its previous interpretation of the nutrient vitamin and minerals annotation in the USDA organic regulations—which references the FDA fortification policy—was incorrect. The NOP interpretation allowed nutrients not covered under the FDA fortification policy to be added to organic products. In January 2012, the NOP published a proposal to allow organic foods to be fortified only with vitamins and minerals designated as “essential” by the FDA. NOP is currently reviewing public comments to that proposed rule; if finalized, this action would exclude certain nutrients, including taurine, an essential amino acid for cats, from use in organic pet food unless listed separately in the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances.

Since the NOP needs additional time to review public comments on the proposed rule and the NOSB’s nutrient recommendations made at the October 2012 NOSB meeting, it published an interim rule in September 2012 on vitamins and minerals. This action continues the allowance for nutrient vitamins and minerals, including those used in organic pet food (e.g. taurine), until NOP completes the January 2012 rulemaking on this issue.

In response to the January 2012 proposed rule that, if finalized, would exclude certain nutrients, the pet food industry petitioned to have 13 amino acids allowed for use in pet food. At the October 2012 NOSB meeting, the Board received public comment on the petition for these amino acids. Due to the need for full public comment on their proposal, the NOSB intends to vote on the petition at their Spring 2013 public meeting. We understand that viable pet food standards are tied to a clear allowance for required nutrients. We will continue to provide information to coordinate with the NOSB as needed regarding the pet food amino acid petition leading up to their next public meeting.

When will a Proposed Rule be Published for Public Comment?

Unfortunately, we cannot accurately predict when our work and the internal review steps will be completed. We value your input and encourage you to submit public comments when the proposed rule is published.



Southwest U.S. Organic Livestock Compliance Tour

On February 12, 2010, the NOP published pasture standards for organic ruminant livestock. These standards require that ruminant livestock have access to organic pasture throughout the grazing season, specific to their geographical climate but at least 120 days. Additionally, organic ruminants' diet must consist of at least 30 percent dry matter intake (on average) from certified organic pasture. The phase-in period of this rule was complete in June 2011, meaning that all operations—regardless of when they were certified—have had to comply with these requirements for over a year.

In July 2012, NOP Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy and Compliance and Enforcement Division Director Matthew Michael visited nine organic livestock operations certified by five certifying agents in the Texas panhandle and eastern New Mexico. The purpose of the tour was to assess:

- The implementation of the pasture rule by accredited certifying agents and organic ruminant operations.
- The 2012 drought and effects of the temporary variances issued to ruminant livestock producers in 2011.
- Current practices related to NOP's work on the origin of livestock.
- The use of sanitizers in bulk milk trucks.
- Outdoor access for poultry.

Pasture Rule and Drought. Most of the visited dairy and heifer replacement operations are meeting the full requirements of the pasture rule, without relying on either the 2011 or 2012 temporary variance due to the drought.

Origin of Livestock. The NOP obtained important insight into current practices for sourcing and transitioning replacement dairy heifers. This feedback will help the NOP in its work to address the long-standing questions regarding the origins of organic livestock.

Sanitizers in Bulk Milk Trucks. The trip reaffirmed the need for additional guidance to ensure operations are meeting both FDA and USDA organic regulations.

Outdoor Access for Poultry. On this trip, NOP visited one poultry farm. When coupled with findings from previous poultry-focused livestock tours, NOP's observations will inform its ongoing work to address the NOSB's recent animal welfare recommendations.

Confused about the 120-day pasture requirement?

Although the 120 days is the minimum, ruminants must graze certified organic pasture throughout the entire grazing season for the geographic region.

Grazing Season: "The period of time when pasture is available for grazing, due to natural precipitation or irrigation..."

"...Due to weather, season, or climate, the grazing season may or may not be continuous. Grazing season may range from 120 days to 365 days, but not less than 120 days per years."

- USDA organic regulations



Standards Update

Vitamins and Minerals. On September 27, the NOP published an interim rule addressing the use of vitamins and minerals in organic products with a request for public comments. Unless renewed, the current allowance for vitamins and minerals would expire October 21, 2012.

The September interim action allows vitamins and minerals, including vitamins A and D, folic acid, or calcium, to be added to organic foods after October 21. Meanwhile, USDA will complete the process of clarifying which additional nutrients may be added to organic products.

Consistent with an April 2011 NOSB recommendation, this interim action continues the USDA organic regulations' current reference to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) fortification policy. Once the USDA completes its evaluation of NOSB recommendations—including those from the October 2012 meeting—and related public comments, it will change the USDA organic regulations accordingly.

NOP Response to NOSB. On September 28, the NOP published a memo in response to the recommendations made at the NOSB's May 2012 business meeting. The NOSB recommended that the NOP:

- Renew six material listings, three with recommended annotation changes, on the National List scheduled to expire on November 3, 2013.
- Add choline and inositol to the list of allowed synthetic substances in processed organic products with restrictions.
- Add citrus hystrix and curry leaf to the list of non-organic agricultural substances which, if the organic form is not commercially available, may be used in processed organic products.
- Develop guidance materials to material review organizations.
- Transmit a letter to Secretary Vilsack regarding the establishment of a Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) ad-hoc NOSB sub-committee.
- Encourage USDA research agencies to prioritize funding for emerging organic research needs as recommended by NOSB on an annual basis.
- Provide additional information to the NOSB on GMO vaccines.

Learn more about each these actions by visiting the NOP Organic Insider archive: <http://bit.ly/insider-archive>.



USDA Organic and Natural Resources Conservation

As recipients of an NRCS-funded Conservation Innovation Grant, the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) and 10 partners offer webinar-based training on the conservation benefits of the following practices:

- Crop rotations
- Pest management in organic systems
- Tropical and semi-tropical organic production
- Biodiversity, especially the links between the USDA organic regulations requirements and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) practice standards.

Additionally, NCAT and their partners are also offering a series of webinars to learn how to be a Technical Service Provider (TSP) on behalf of the NRCS. TSPs are individuals or businesses that have technical expertise in conservation planning and design for a variety of conservation activities.

TSPs are hired by farmers, ranchers, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, or public agencies to provide these services (including writing Conservation Activity Plans for farmers transitioning to organic production). These efforts are designed to better integrate sustainable and organic agriculture production systems into NRCS planning and programs. The 10 organizations joining NRCS and NCAT in this effort include:

- Center for Rural Affairs
- Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
- National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
- Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service
- Organic Farming Research Foundation
- Virginia Association for Biological Farming
- Florida Organic Growers, Kansas Rural Center
- Wild Farm Alliance
- Land Stewardship Project
- Practical Farmers of Iowa

Learn more, view the webinars, and register for the November 1 TSP training at <http://bit.ly/nrcs-conservation>.



USDA Grant: Local Ag in Nevada Hispanic Community

USDA awarded the Nevada Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with Hungry Mother Organics, with \$45,747 to assess demand for locally grown and organic fruits and vegetables in the Hispanic community of northern Nevada. Nevada growers can then use these insights to improve their effectiveness in marketing to diverse consumers.

About the Grant. The Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP) provides matching funds to State agencies to help explore new market opportunities for U.S. food and agricultural products. This program also encourages research and innovation aimed at improving the efficiency and performance of the marketing system. www.ams.usda.gov/fsmip

About Hungry Mother Organics. Hungry Mother Organics is a non-profit working farm, certified organic by the Nevada Department of Agriculture. In addition to growing certified organic plants and produce to serve the Nevada and Lake Tahoe regions, their mission is to educate the public on principles and methods of organic and sustainable food production and consumption. This organization has initiated the 1,000 Backyard Farm Campaign, registering backyard farms in the Carson Valley / Reno region. They aim to provide interested citizens with the training and knowledge that will enable them to grow their own food and, in turn, help their neighbors do the same. www.hungrymotherorganics.com

Farmers' Guide to Organic Contracts

Recently, the Farmers' Legal Action Group (FLAG) published the Farmers' Guide to Organic Contracts. This new resource for the organic community can help organic farmers evaluate, negotiate, and manage contract agreements with buyers of organic farm products. This farmer-friendly legal guide includes:

- An overview of contract laws important to farmers.
- A checklist and practical toolkit farmers can use to review and negotiate the contract offer.
- Highlighted sections illustrating how federal organic regulations interact with organic contracts.
- Examples and discussion of over 100 types of organic contract provisions.
- Detailed information about solving the types of contract disputes that commonly arise in the organic market.

Farmers' Legal Action Group, Inc. (FLAG) is a nonprofit law center dedicated to providing legal services and support to family farmers and their communities in order to help keep family farmers on the land. <http://bit.ly/flag-organic>

This project was supported by the Organic Agricultural Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) program of the USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA).



NOP Staff Update

Natural Products Expo East

September 18 - 20, 2012, the NOP unveiled its new display, which ties in the Organic Literacy Initiative, at the Natural Products Expo in Baltimore, Maryland. Michelle Arsenault, Renee Mann, Lisa Brines, and Patricia Atkins (pictured above, left to right) joined other NOP staff in providing information to current and prospective organic operations and accredited certifying agents.

NOP staff participated in two panels at Expo: one on organic product development and one on the USDA organic regulations. Other staff highlighted USDA's Organic Literacy Initiative. Additionally, NOP staff surveyed organic products on the show floor, assessing compliance with the labeling sections of the USDA organic regulations.

Web Updates

Labeling Fact Sheet. The NOP updated the textiles section of the organic labeling fact sheet to address textiles meeting the Global Organic Textile Standard. <http://bit.ly/organic-labeling>

Changing Certifying Agents. The NOP made minor edits to the following instruction to certifying agents NOP 2604: Responsibilities of Certified Operations Changing Certifying Agents. www.ams.usda.gov/NOPProgramHandbook